



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF THE CLERK**

Reply to Northern Division Address

Felicia C. Cannon, Clerk of Court  
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**ELECTRONIC FILING PROCEDURES FOR SELF-REPRESENTED PRISONER CASES**

Unless exempted by the presiding judge, the following procedures are applicable to self-represented prisoner cases filed or pending on or after April 1, 2005. The types of cases include actions brought under 42 U.S.C. §1983, *Bivens* claims, writs of mandamus, 28 U.S.C § 2254, 28 U.S.C. § 2241, and other civil actions. These procedures do not apply to motions brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2255.

**Procedures for Attorneys**

- Attorneys file electronically in CM/ECF using the same rules and procedures applicable to civil cases with the understanding that if a particular exhibit is not legible when scanned they may file it in paper format.
- Attorneys must serve a paper copy on the prisoner. The paper copy must be identical to the electronically filed version, i.e., printed from the PDF version.

**Procedures for Prisoners**

- Prisoners file in paper format as follows:
  - Habeas Corpus Petitions (§§ 2241, 2254)
    - At the time of filing a new petition or motion, self-represented prisoners must provide the Clerk's Office with one service copy of the petition.
    - Except for the original petition, self-represented prisoners need not file a service copy or otherwise serve the government any document. All court documents filed by self-represented prisoners are deemed "filed electronically" for Local Rule 102.1.c purposes at the time the documents are electronically docketed by the Clerk's

Office. For any response to a document filed electronically under this paragraph, any deadline for filing a response will be calculated from the date the document is electronically docketed by the Clerk's Office. *See* Local Rule 112.1.

- Prisoner Civil Rights Actions (§ 1983, Bivens)
  - At the time of filing the complaint, self-represented prisoners must provide the Clerk's Office with a service copy of the complaint as to each defendant.
  - When a defendant is represented by counsel, all court documents—other than the original complaint—filed by self-represented prisoners in civil rights actions are deemed “filed electronically” for Local Rule 102.1.c purposes at the time the documents are electronically docketed by the Clerk's Office. For any response to a document filed electronically under this paragraph, any deadline for filing a response will be calculated from the date the document is electronically docketed by the Clerk's Office. *See* Local Rule 112.2.c.i.
  - When a defendant is not represented by counsel, self-represented prisoners are responsible for serving a copy of all documents filed with the Court upon a defendant in accordance with Fed. R. Civ. P. 5. *See* Local Rule 112.2.c.ii.
  - Self-represented prisoners are solely responsible both for determining which defendants are represented and for ensuring unrepresented defendants are served with a copy of any document filed with the Court.

### **Clerk's Office Procedures**

- The Clerk's Office scans prisoner filings. The scanned version is the official court record.
- The Clerk's Office mails paper copies of orders to prisoners. It does not mail paper copies to counsel.

- The Clerk's Office mails a paper copy of litigation coordinator letters to prison staff.
- The Clerk's Office scans paper documents submitted by prison staff, i.e. account statements, correspondence re service, etc.
- No paperless orders will be entered in prisoner cases. If a paperless order is mistakenly entered, the Clerk's Office will generate an order, attach a PDF version to the docket entry, and mail a paper copy to the prisoner.
- USM 285 forms, certified mail receipts, and other service related documents will be scanned. Originals will not be maintained.
- Copies of receipts for partial filing fees will not be scanned. The information is entered into the CM/ECF system and the receipt maintained in the chambers file.

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